



Springfield Iron Company

Factory Street
Illinois EPA Site # 1671209276
Sangamon County
Springfield, Illinois

Fact Sheet # 1

October 2010



Background

Recently Illinois EPA has become aware that several areas on and near the site of the former Springfield Iron Company plant have shown evidence that **coal tar**, a common byproduct of coal-gas manufacturing, may be present in the ground. Tar seeps have appeared at several locations in the area.

Site Location and Description

The Springfield Iron Company operated from 1872 until 1905, when the plant structures were demolished and the site was leveled. The plant was located east of Factory Street and south of Griffiths Avenue in Springfield. It was north of what are now Ridgely and Black Avenues and most of the plant was west of what is now 14th Street (see diagram above). South of Pluto Avenue, a portion of the plant extended east to the present location of the Chicago and Illinois Midland Railroad. The plant manufactured iron and steel, primarily for the railroad industry. Part of the process included four "gas houses" where coal was used to make gas that was then used in the production process.

**Chemical
Information**

Coal tar contains a number of chemicals that can be harmful if people are exposed to high concentrations or over a long period of time, so the Illinois EPA is beginning an investigation to determine how much coal tar is in the area and where it is located. Our purpose is to make sure that people will not be directly exposed to the coal tar chemicals. Since the drinking water in Springfield comes from the public water supply, there is no risk from drinking water. The primary concern would be from possible direct contact with the coal-tar or soils containing coal-tar residues. There may also be cinders left over from the burning of coal at the site, which can contain low levels of harmful chemicals.

**How You Can
Help**

Illinois EPA would appreciate hearing from any residents or workers in the area of the former plant who have seen evidence of plant-related residues (coal-tar, cinders, etc.) in the area. You can contact the person identified at the end of this Fact Sheet to share your information.

**The
Investigation**

Starting the week of October 12, 2010, field investigators from Illinois EPA will be taking soil borings at a number of locations on and near the former plant site. You may see them in the area during that week. Because they may come into contact with soils containing coal-tar as they bore below the ground, workers may sometimes wear protective coveralls over their work clothes. The team will be taking periodic air samples to make sure that the boring activities are not releasing harmful air emissions into the neighborhood.

**Anticipated
Schedule**

The initial investigation should take no more than a week. Depending on what that investigation finds, further work may be needed. As soon as the investigation report is final (this may take several weeks), you will receive a second Fact Sheet telling you what we find. The report will be placed in a **Site Information Repository** that will then be established at the Lincoln Library main branch, 326 S. 7th Street in Springfield.

**Illinois
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